

INQUIRY INTO PUPPY FARMING IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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Good afternoon.

Like all responsible pet owners, I abhor the idea of puppy farms, which the RSPCA defines as 'an intensive dog breeding facility that is operated under inadequate conditions that fail to meet the dogs' behavioural, social and/or physiological needs'.

I also abhor having to work a full-time job to support my hobby of being a responsible registered Dogs NSW breeder, and then for the last year at least having to spend an additional 10 - 20 hours a week reading and commenting on ignorant legislation which perhaps has good intent but demonstrates a lack of understanding of how responsible registered breeders operate, and lumps all breeders who ever take any money for pups into the basket of "commercial breeders".

Today in one of my 2 rare days off, having tried to educate and encourage some of my puppy families to realise that unless they become involved they will not be able to buy a well planned healthy purebred dog if the Animal Justice Party has their way, I now have to sit down and write to you in the hope that you will listen to reason. Then I have to study for a job interview, because my current job is not paying enough to enable me to supplement the losses I make annually being a responsible registered hobby breeder.

Here are some of my key objections to the draft Companion Animals Amendment (Puppy Farming) Bill 2021.

1. The AJP's stated aim is to stop companion animals being bred. Instead they want any companion animals to come from a shelter. 5% of dogs in shelters are purebred dogs. Of 179 pups I have bred, 4 have had to be rehomed, in all cases they came back to me and within a month I had them in a responsible home that has loved them for the remainder of their lives. If you agree that companion animals must come from shelters, you are saying that people who plan, health test, focus on breeding healthy well built animals and managing the gene pool in Australia should be penalised. Instead, you want to reward irresponsible people who breed animals with no commitment to their welfare, or you want to support people who do not take their commitment to an animal seriously and prefer to dump it at a shelter than consider seriously whether to buy it in the first place.

2. The AJP wants to limit all breeders to no more than 2 entire bitches, or if anyone has the audacity to want 3 entire bitches, they need a licence, the same as any commercial breeder. Gundog bitches should not be bred before 18 months. My own breed, Hungarian Vizslas, generally should not be bred before 24 months of age. They are not like terriers, which can be bred from 12 months of age.

What am I supposed to tell the numerous families who contact me wanting a healthy well-raised pup when I can only keep 2 entire bitches, and I choose to keep the 10 week old and 10 month old bitches I have just bred who are the best bitches I have bred to date, so I will not have pups available for at least another year, and then only one litter of perhaps 6 pups in 2023 for the 1 or 2 responsible queries I receive per week??

3. No breeder to have more than 10 entire bitches. I currently have 8 entire bitches available to me, only 4 of whom are of an age to be bred from. I bred one last year and she did not get pregnant. I bred another last year, had a litter, so have had to skip one season for her healthy before I can breed from her again. That leaves me with 2 bitches old enough to have a litter for the next year. Do I really sound like a mad puppy farmer pumping out animals that noone wants and that I don't care about?

4. Fines of \$110,000 for non-compliance and 2 years prison. Local Councils having the authority to regulate me and enter my premises to seize my animals. My bills each year for the

last 3 or 4 years have been approximately \$80 - \$100K for the dogs, which includes approx \$50K for food, vet and animal attendants. The balance is thousands of kilometres driving to shows, show photos and outfits, toys and facilities to engage the animals, costs of importing dogs or semen to improve the available gene pool. Income from the dogs has never exceeded 60% of that amount, so I work and always have worked an independent job to cover the remaining dog costs and my own costs of living. Each year I have had a tax refund because my net income is below the taxable threshold. How do you think I am going to pay a fine if I accidentally breach a provision of this whacky act? Do you want me to be homeless and to have to put all my dogs in shelters, because that is the only way I could pay a fine of that size? Or do you want to force me to have to start disobeying the law and concealing dogs, because that is the only way people who breed dogs and are NOT puppy farmers will be able to breed dogs if this legislation comes into force.

Do you think any intelligent individual is going to expose themselves to being investigated by Council? Their rangers can't even tell what dog breeds are, let alone understand the reasons why responsible breeders do things particular ways.

5. Anyone with a breeding animal must be licensed. All animals must be desexed. Any male dog over the age of 6 must be desexed. Why? A responsible breeder watches how a bitch develops to decide if they want to keep her and breed from her. They show her to assess her qualities objectively, and may not decide to desex her until she is 12 months old. A study of 2500 vizslas by Professor Scott Bailey at University of State, North Carolina, around 2014 determined that it is better for dogs' resistance to cancer and their bone development if they are left undesexed until they are at least 2. Why should their health and welfare be compromised by whack jobs like Emma Hurst who would rather euthanase companion animals than allow people the freedom to choose what breed of dog they want, and to support people who raise healthy animals conforming to breed standards developed over centuries.

6. No breeding of related animals. Clearly the AJP has no understanding of anything to do with healthy breeding. Linebreeding has been practised by farmers for centuries and depends on breeding related animals and every so often breeding in unrelated animals to freshen the gene pool. My breed was registered in 1917 when 9 bitches and 3 dogs were entered in the stud book. All vizslas are descended from those 12 dogs. They are all related. So what does "related animals" mean in the AJP's universe? Let them think it through and study healthy animals who have been planned and bred by people who understand breeding and then come back with a sensible proposal that does not waste all our time trying to understand it.

I tell you who the AJP sound like. My breed, Hungarian Vizslas, were treasured by aristocrats, and thus could not be afforded by peasants. When Stalin marched into Hungary in 1948, he had every vizsla shot because they symbolised the bourgeois. 90% of the breed was destroyed. In Hungary, breeders could not register an entire litter until 1954, because the quality of their pups was so bad that the Hubertus committee would inspect their pups before then and tell them they could register one or 2 of the pups, the rest would be put down for being of such poor quality. The Animal Justice Party sounds like Stalin. They want to destroy all that is beautiful, planned, cared for, and they want everyone to have the same problems, and to have to deal with animals that probably have health and behavioural issues, as well as not satisfying any breed standard and thus being totally unpredictable.

Do you want to be a Minister who supports the communisation of companion animal ownership? IF not, you must oppose this Bill. On behalf of your numerous constituents who want to have lives beyond caring for their animals, working, and having to read and make monthly submissions on animal welfare legislation that has been poorly considered, please object to anyone drafting animal welfare legislation unless they have consulted recognised

experts in the breeds they intend to affect or are qualified themselves by experience as well as education.

Thank you for listening.

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Kind regards,

Robyn E I Hanney